



olive or greenish-gray eggs in May or June. Fall migration begins in August. It is rare in southeastern Iowa during the winter.

Habitats

Natural lakes and prairie marshes; constructed lakes, ponds, and reservoirs

Iowa Status

common; native

Iowa Range

summer: northern half of Iowa and scattered in southern Iowa in suitable habitats; migrant: statewide

Bibliography

Iowa Department of Natural Resources. 2001.
Biodiversity of Iowa: Aquatic Habitats CD-ROM.

northern shoveler

Anas clypeata

Kingdom:	Animalia
Division/Phylum:	Chordata - vertebrates
Class:	Aves
Order:	Anseriformes
Family:	Anatidae

Features

The northern shoveler is 17 to 20 inches long. It has a large, flat, rounded bill (like a spatula) for gathering food. The legs are orange. The male's bill is black, while the female's bill is olive with black spots. In breeding plumage, the male has a black and white body with a cinnamon belly and sides, a white chest, a greenish-black head, and gray-blue coloring on the front edge of his wings. The female has a brown-speckled body and has the same gray-blue patch on the front of the wings as the male.

Natural History

The northern shoveler winters in the coastal regions of the Gulf of Mexico, the West Indies, and Central America. It lives in and around marshes, shallow lakes, ponds, flooded fields, and sloughs. It eats aquatic insects, snails, zooplankton, and seeds of buttonbush, corn, and millet. The male's call is "took, took, took." Spring migrants begin arriving in Iowa in late March. Shovelers that nest in Iowa lay nine to 12